

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 25-29 are pending in this case. Claims 25, 26, and 28 are amended to incorporate the subject matter of originally-filed Claim 22, and Claims 22-24 and non-elected Claims 1-21 and 30 are canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, by the present amendment. No new matter is added.

In the Detailed Action in the outstanding Office Action, Claims 22-24 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Umeya (U.S. Patent No. 6,028,581) in view of Torihata, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,794,634) and Okumura, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,739,804), and Claims 25-27 were indicated as allowable.

Applicants and Applicants' representative thank Examiner Tran for the courtesy of a telephone interview with Applicants' representative on November 21, 2008 to clarify the status of the claims in the outstanding Office Action. During the discussion, Examiner Tran indicated that Claim 28 also included allowable subject matter and that Claim 29, which depends from Claim 28, should have been objected to rather than rejected.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 25-29.

Claims 22-24 are canceled. Thus, the rejection of Claims 22-24 is moot.

Claims 25, 26, and 28 are written in independent form, as suggested by the outstanding Office Action and by the telephone discussion.

Thus, pending Claims 25-29 are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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